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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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June 2011

President's Message

Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ

Hi All,

We're into the month of June now and our summer break is coming up. Field Day is just a few weekends off as well. I'll see you next week at the picnic, bring something good!

Hope to see you at the next meeting. 73!

Scott KI6YYZ

May Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by our club president Scott Joseph KI6YYZ at 1910 hours local time.

There was no report from the Treasurer because Bob K6HEW was not available. There was no meeting minutes to approve because there was no regular meeting in April.

Old Business: We discussed the March of Dimes set up and felt we had everything under control. The June picnic meeting was discussed and final preparations were made. If it is sunny we will be outside, if rainy we will still prepare food outside but eat inside of the firehouse meeting room.

New Business: We discussed the 2011 Field Day and decided we'd go with three stations including a GOTA and a data station. Scott Joseph KI6YYZ will bring and set up the data station, Marcus Maclean KI6WDX will bring the GOTA station set up, KD6WKY will bring the HF station set up, Chris KD7TQP will bring the deep cell marine batteries that worked so well in years past. The set up will be inside the steel building shop at the Larry W6OMF QTH.

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The meeting was adjourned at 2100. Further milling around was completed at or about 2120 local time.

Around the Shack

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

The end of the HF contest season as far as I'm concerned is the CQ WPX Contest in May. The CW portion of the contest was the last weekend of May and I had planned on casually working the contest for a few hours over the weekend.

I began working the CW contest Friday evening after setting up my N3FJP software contest log and software. Interestingly as good as band conditions have been lately, I was only working stations west of the Rockies in North America. I worked an hour Firday night, an hour Saturday afternoon, and an hour Saturday night.

When I got up early Sunday morning to work Japan on 4Ø meters for the contest, my computer wouldn't turn on. I got a few little flashes of a start up but that was it. Damn it!

I determined my desk top power supply had given up the ghost after eight years of service. I decided to go to the gym, workout and think about what I wanted to do. Should I dump this machine and purchase a new one or fix it? I decided I'd take a look at it.

I determined I could replace the power supply pretty easily if I could find one. After looking around on my wife Cora's iPad which she won at a Chinese New Year party (luck duck!), I decided I could buy one at Fry's in Concord.

Since I had a couple of houses to photograph for my work in Cordelia and Concord I stopped by my office to pick up my camera and off I went. Fry's was only two miles from the last house I had to look at in Concord.

I found a PS that would work for only $16 after rebate and purchased it. On the way home I listened to the Orioles vs A's game on my mobile AM receiver. They won.

I installed the new PS, plugged in all different connectors and had a few spares since this PS had a healthy wiring bundle.

I reassembled all my plug-ins and turned on my machine. It worked well except for a loud fan. Why was the fan so loud? Hmmm?

I decided to work the last hour of the contest and ended up with 69 contact in four hours of work including a trip to Fry's for the new PS. Geez.

Later in the evening I downloaded a neat fan speed utility from CNET that worked great except the fan kept going back up to 100%. Why? I was too tired and went to bed.

In the morning I turned on the computer again, loud fan again. I had two fans listed on this utility but didn't know which was which so I had to open the side of the computer to see which was which. When I did this I realized I had forgotten to replace my mother board cooling fan back into the bracket; it was just dangling by the wires blowing nowhere at 100% while the heatsink was radiating lots of heat.

As soon as I put the fan back in place within a minute the fan powered down to 40% and stayed there. Mystery solved.

On Wednesday night I had a group of Cub Scouts from Pack 100, Den 5 come over the house for an amateur radio demonstration. They needed to either go to a newpaper tour, commercial radio station tour, or visit an amateur radio station. I was asked to help out which I was glad to do.

Prior to the kids arrival I set up my station, and looked for spots in the Western Pacific that might be easy to work on a nice Spring evening in late May. I was fortunate enough to hear an excellent signal from Phil FO8RZ in French Polynesia on the 15 meter band. I monitored him for an hour banging out contact all over North America. Wow.

When the kids arrived I brought them in and gathered them around my workstation for a chat about amateur radio at the first grade level. Keeping in mind who my audience was, I explained how much fun I had talking to people around the world.

We worked Phil FO8RZ with ease, then looked at the globe to see where he was in the world. I think the parents were more impressed with that than the kids.

The kids really had fun on two meters! I had Larry W6OMF, Tom N6AJR, Scott KI6YYZ, and Rick KJ6OOM waiting to talk with the kids.

I coached them how to push the button and talk. One by one they lined up and had a short chat with the group. I'm telling you they loved it!

Lastly we went outside and watched the beam turn from south to north which was a real six year old show stopper.

They all thanked me as did the parents as they headed out for the evening. I invited them back anytime they wanted to talk on the radio as long as they brought their parents with them.

I have received email correspondence requesting that I become certified as a Merit Badge Counselor for the Radio Merit Badge. It looks involved. Along with the application there is an anti-perv course (my words) to take in order to be qualified. I understand. Not sure I want to do this, I'll think about it.

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2009
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Scott Joseph, KI6YYZ
Vice President: Marcus Maclean, KI6WDX
Secretary: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman KE6MDM

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

I got my QSL card from the Sable Island DXpedition last week. This is a very small line island in the North Atlantic which is part of Canada. I think there are a bunch of horses running around the island, but that's about it.

The landing strip was the sandy beach and I think you can see the tire marks on the QSL card.

Thanks to Skip F6HC for stopping by to help me fix my 40 meter wire loop at the base of my GAP Titan DX vertical antenna. The plum tree branches seem to be bothering that antenna. It's either the tree or the antenna, hmmmm.

A Communique from our VP

Dear Fellow Members:

As this radio club's elected VP, one of my interests is to try and bring in qualified quality guest speakers so that the members of this club can gain additional knowledge. I've been a member of tghis club but for a short while and of the club meetings I've be a party of in the past, I just know that there is more to a monthly meeting than simply having a raffle for some pocket change. And so, I decided to embark on this mission to provide as much as possible knowledge to our members from other outside amateur radio operators although I had hoped for a larger turnout in April when first guest speaker (Richard "Dean" Straw, N6BV) graced our club with his HF Propagation presentation. After our summer break (I'm not really sure we break for the summer each year?), I'm going to try and bring in another qualified quality guest speaker in the 3rd quarter of this year so that their knowledge can be presented to our members and other non-members in order to better educate each radio operator.

But in doing this task, I would like to hear from any club member regarding a subject that they feel that they are not well versed in or would simply like more information and I will see what I can accomplish in finding a guest speaker. How would any of you feel about listening to a factory representative or personnel on a radio topic? This club has about 25 paid members, but as it's elected club official, I'd like to know what our members what they would like to see in a presentation. I don't think that any one of us in this club "knows everything about amateur radio" and on that point, there must be some members that have some thoughts on a subject they deem worthy. If you have anything or a certain subject in mind, just email me what exactly it is at:

freonfiz@pacbell.net

and I'll do my best to bring in someone who is able to impart their knowledge in a guest speaker presentation!

Starting this coming Monday after it hopefully quits raining, I'm about ready to start on a project for one of our club members, Walter, WB6JTJ who is disabled and is not able to go about the task of installing his much needed radio antennas. As each phase is completed, I will write a news colum detailing what transpired along with perhaps some photos that could possibly be posted on our club's website. Basically, Walter, WB6JTJ will have a nicely sized radio grounding system installed at his house along with installing a new "fan" style wire dipole antenna from Alpha Delta along with a new 6 meter Yagi including a rotator and another dual band base antenna he already has (Diamond X-50A) and a homemade "egg beater" antenna so he can "reach out and touch" those distant satellites he likes to work and CW operators like himself.

This work is being done because of how his present antennas are installed and because what he has already mounted isn't giving him much ability in contacting others. But the main reason has to do with his AT&T U-verse modem module. In the past when he operated his HF radio, how the wire dipole is installed, the modem has failed 3 times because as a wireless network router, it is set up like other modules are in that it's looking for a radio signal from any laptop transmitter and so, he's getting some new antennas and I will be helping him mount them up alot higher and alot further away from where everything presently is located so that the current modem isn't damaged like it has been in the past.

So look for each month's progress report along with some photos! And please email me with your subject suggestions!!

73

Marcus Maclean KI6WDX
VP, Vaca Valley Radio Club

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browse our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please email us at w6vvr@vacavalleyradio.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance.

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)

2011 Field Day

By Jerry Olive KD6WKY
W6VVR Field Day Chairman

We will again have a Field Day station up and running to represent our club on the air. This is exciting!

Friday, June 24 in the afternoon, TBA we will pre-assemble the major elements of our three stations and the location set up. All are welcome to join in. We will meet at Larry W6OMF to set it up. Look for updates on the time.

On Saturday morning we will go on the air at 18ØØ UTC which is 11:00am local time.

I hope all of you will come by to sit and operate, visit, have a burger and relax. Field Day is not a contest, it is an amateur radio demonstration of emergency operations using portable equipment and equally as important it is about fun.

We've been on the air for Field Day for several years now. I've noticed most people really don't want to operate which is the best part of the weekend.

Bring your non-ham friends, let them sit in the chair and operate. I know they'd love it.

We may have some scouts out visiting us this year too. I have received initial communications from the Scout Master in Fairfield. I'll get with him this weekend and see what I can do to answer his questions.

Come to the picnic and let's talk about Field Day. We can have some great fun and fellowship on the forth weekend of June...rain or shine...HI HI.

FEMA Administrator Calls Amateur Radio "The Last Line of Defense"

05/25/2011

In an **FCC forum** on earthquake communications preparedness, Federal Emergency Management Agency (**FEMA**) Administrator Craig Fugate described the Amateur Radio operator as "the ultimate backup, the originators of what we call social media." The forum-- held May 3 at FCC Headquarters in Washington, DC -- brought together officials from the White House, the Department of Homeland Security (**DHS**), the United States Geological Survey (**USGS**), FEMA, the FCC and the private sector. Fugate and FCC Bureau of Public Safety and Homeland Security Chief Jamie Barnett gave the opening remarks.

Later in the forum, Fugate spoke more on Amateur Radio. "During the initial communications out of Haiti, volunteers using assigned frequencies that they are allocated, their own equipment, their own money, nobody pays them, were the first ones oftentimes getting word out in the critical first hours and first days as the rest of the systems came back up," he told the forum. "I think that there is a tendency because we have done so much to build infrastructure and resiliency in all our other systems, we have tended to dismiss that role 'When Everything Else Fails.' Amateur Radio oftentimes is our last line of defense."

Fugate said that he thinks "we get so sophisticated and we have gotten so used to the reliability and resilience in our wireless and wired and our broadcast industry and all of our public safety communications, that we can never fathom that they'll fail. They do. They have. They will. I think a strong Amateur Radio community [needs to be] plugged into these plans. Yes, most of the time they're going be bored, because a lot of the time, there's not a lot they're going to be doing that other people aren't doing with Twitter and Facebook and everything else. But when you need Amateur Radio, you really need them."

SATERN Seeks Amateur Radio Volunteers for Joplin Operations

06/03/2011

In accord with our *Memorandum of Understanding* with The Salvation Army, the ARRL is looking for volunteers to aid them in their work in Joplin, Missouri at this time. There is a specific process to be followed in doing this, ***so please read this information carefully***.

The Salvation Army continues to provide food, drink and other items of basic care to survivors and rescue workers in the impacted areas of Joplin. While cell phone coverage is no longer much of a problem in Joplin, Amateur Radio continues to be important in certain operations -- such as those of the Salvation Army -- where the ability for several persons to hear what is going on at the same time is an asset.

As a **SATERN** (Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network) operator, if deployed, you will be asked to go out on Salvation Army vehicles into the areas impacted by the Joplin tornado to supply logistical support. The Salvation Army vehicles supply basic human needs (particularly food and drink), and you will play a big part in the operation. You will relay information such as inventory, requests for food and drink and maintenance problems that develop. At certain periods of the day, radio traffic has been almost constant. The Salvation Army Disaster Response Operations are now running from 7 AM to as late as 9 PM each day.

DO NOT SELF-DEPLOY! Wait to be contacted for possible deployment and assignment.

The qualifications for being assigned are:

- Technician or higher Amateur Radio license.
- Good health -- you will encounter 100 degree heat, exertion and long hours. You need to be in good shape!
- Ability to take on a 3-5 day deployment in the field.

- Have a handheld transceiver and a mobile (VHF/UHF) radio -- APRS capability is a big plus.

The process to volunteer is:

1. Send an e-mail to **emergency@arrl.org**. In this e-mail, please include your name, call sign, contact information (phone and e-mail), location and specific information on how you meet each of the criteria above.

2. Your information will be checked against the current needs.

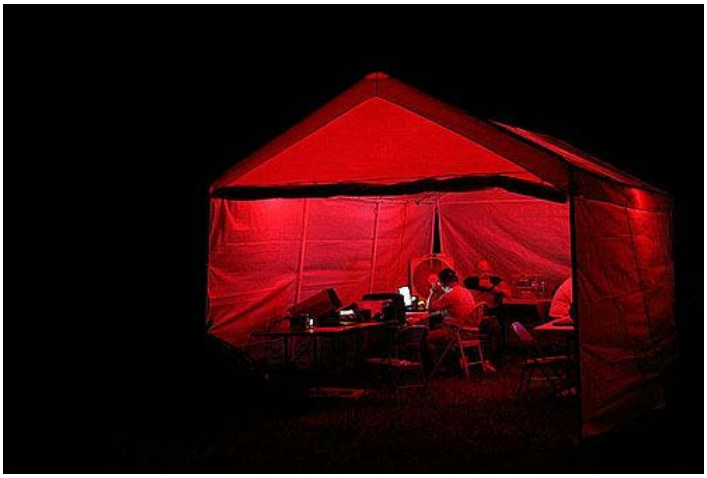
3. If cleared, your contact information will be sent to our liaison with SATERN field leadership.

4. If assigned, you will be contacted by SATERN directly and given further instructions.

The Salvation Army will try to supply you with some type of lodging, if available. If deployed, you should consider bringing a sleeping bag or make other sleeping arrangements should you need to be housed at the Salvation Army.

SATERN operations in Joplin are being held on the 147.00 (positive offset) repeater. If you are deployed, you will need at minimum a 2 meter handheld radio with a spare battery pack (or cigarette lighter adapter) and a magnetic mount antenna. Due to some communications problems experienced on 2 meters within the impacted area, a 2 meter mobile radio with magnetic mount antenna would be desirable. Additional information will be furnished to you.

No reimbursement for travel or any other expenses has been authorized at this time. Therefore, SATERN recommends that you record your mileage and save your receipts. You may be able to deduct your mileage from your taxes (consult your tax preparer). The Salvation Army will, of course, provide you food and drink while on duty.



This is one of my favorite Field Day photos ever. It has the tent going with black out lights just like the ships did when I was in the Navy! Wooah!

See you Wednesday night at the picnic. Vine Street Firehouse.

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues --------- $20.00 _____
Each Family Member -- $ 2.00 _____
Student ---------- $ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation --- _____
Call/Name badge -------- $10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues ---------- $37.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total ---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____
DATE:_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143